

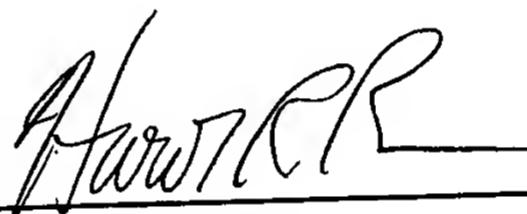
REMARKS

Favorable action is requested for Claims 1-7. The foregoing amendments are made to better define the invention. No new matter is added.

If the Examiner should be of the opinion that a telephone conference would be helpful in resolving any outstanding issues, the Examiner is urged to contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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APPENDIX

Please replace the paragraph at page 1, lines 20-23 with the following:

- a lift mechanism [which constitutes a floor for the bending station] for lowering the mould carriages from the upper tier to the lower tier together with bent glass panels;

Kindly amend the claims as follows:

1. An apparatus for bending glass panels, said apparatus comprising
 - an upper tier of successive mould carriages (9), having a front or back wall (11) thereof separating successive preheating stations (2, 3) and one or more successive bending stations (4a, 4b) from each other, said mould carriages (9) being adapted to be intermittently movable towards the bending station (4b);
 - a lower tier of successive mould carriages (9), having a front or back wall (11) thereof separating successive cooling stations (5, 6, 7) from each other, said mould carriages being (9) being adapted to be intermittently movable in a direction opposite to the moving direction of the upper tier carriages;
 - a number of bending moulds (12) supported by the mould carriages (9);
 - radiation heating elements (13, 14) in the ceiling of the preheating stations at least in some (3) of the preheating stations;
 - radiation heating elements (14) in the ceiling of one or more bending stations (4a, 4b);
 - an intermediate floor (15) which separates the pre-bending station (4a) upstream of the bending station (4b) and/or at least the last preheating station (3b) from a station (5) therebelow;
 - a lift mechanism (20) [which constitutes a floor for the bending stations (4b)] for lowering the mould carriages (9) from the upper tier to the lower tier together with bent glass panels;

the mould carriages (9) being provided with an open-structured or otherwise highly heat transmitting floor (10), characterized in that on top of the intermediate floor (15) are radiation heating elements (16) positioned below the level defined by a floor (10) of the mould carriage (9).